

Addressing Food Insecurities and Access to Food

City Council Work Session,
September 12, 2023



Food Security & Insecurity

10.2 %

of households report food insecurity (2021)

20-24.6 %

of adults reporting food insecurity in the last year (2023)



Addressing Food Insecurity

- Federal and state food benefit programs such as SNAP and WIC
- Senior and school meal programs
- Community support for food delivery services, food banks, mobile food pantries, and community-based food distribution
- Community gardens



Access to Food

One way to address food insecurity is to focus on supporting ways to access food more effectively.

This considers everything from:

- wholesalers,
- retailers,
- restaurants,
- coops,
- farmers markets



Food Access – City Supported Programs

The City Council currently supports and works with a number of community organizations to address access to food, including:

- FRESH Farm at Isabella Bush Park (Together! and Tumwater School District)
- Garden Raised Bounty (GRuB)
- Senior Services for South Sound
- Summer Youth Employment Program
- Tumwater Community Garden Grant Program
- Tumwater School District Summer Lunch Program
- Tumwater Youth Summer Camp
- Thurston County Food Bank (satellite operations)
- United Way of Thurston County (employee fund drive)



Other Food Related Activities

The City currently allows the following food related activities in the City:

- Agriculture
- Community Gardens
- Farmers Markets
- Food Processing
- Food Trucks or Trailers, individual or in courts
- Restaurants
- Retail Sale of Food, including Food Processed on Site
- Food Banks, Mobile Food Pantries, and Community-based Food Distributions Centers



Food Sharing



Food System Plans

- Preserving farmland and recruiting new farmers increasing local food production and adding to our local economy
- Advocating for policies that enable residents and businesses to make and process their food locally
- Providing broader access to high-quality food and disseminating better food and nutrition education to empower people to make healthier choices for themselves and their families
- Reducing food waste through gleaning, redistribution and composting to support food security and the environment



Spokane Regional Food Action Plan



Farmland Preservation



Increase Local Food Processing



Healthy Food for All



Reduce Food Waste

Whatcom County Food System Plan

Goal 1: Cultivate equity and justice in our food system

Goal 2: Protect and regenerate our soil, water, and land

Goal 3: Build a resilient and vibrant local food economy

Goal 4: Ensure access to healthy food for all

Goal 5: Mitigate emissions from food system activities and adapt the food system to a changing climate



Staff Recommendation

1. Development of a Food System Plan.
2. The Plan focus on how to provide healthy food to the community, reduce food waste, and support local food processing.
3. Eliminate barriers, address gaps in the current system, and produce solutions to implement at appropriate scale.
4. Maintain and update resource materials through its jurisdictional and community partners.



Discussion & Questions

